



SOUTHERN ONTARIO
STREET RODS INC.
London, Ontario



**Southern
Ontario
Street Rods
Inc.**

Established 1969

2012 Inductee

The history of Southern Ontario Street Rods Inc is, to a large degree, the history of Street Rodding in this part of the world and their hosting of the very first CANATS in London in 1971 was a milestone event as it gave birth of the Canadian Street Rod Association and the concept of a truly national organization and annual event

In the broadest of terms, *their* history is *our* history and their induction tonight into the Canadian Street Rodding Hall of Fame is most deserved. Their list of members and former members includes 4 previous Hall Of Fame Inductees, Jim Flett, John Van Dube, Roy Bogart and Frank Wall and some of the most respected people in hobby.

John & Doris Van Dube



Roy Bogart



Jim Flett



Many consider the late 1960's to be the beginning of the modern day hot rod movement that morphed into what we call "Street Rodding".

This was fueled by a number of things going on simultaneously in North America. The muscle car era in Detroit was coming to a close as OEM manufacturers were being forced to look more at safety, fuel mileage and environmental issues by both the consumer and the government. Gasoline was starting to rise in price, insurance costs were going through the roof and legislation was starting to be a concern.

At the same time, the hot rodders of the 50's were growing up and cleaning up and wanted to get out and enjoy their cars. Put it all together and Street Rodding, "hot rodding" with a focus on Street legal activities and simply driving and enjoying your ride was born. These actions excited a lot of people and the sport took off lead by the clubs and associations that were created almost overnight. \



In Southern Ontario a group of like minded friends and acquaintances decided that there was a need to bring street rodders together here. This group came primarily from the London, Chatham and Sarnia areas and included such notables as Roy Bogart, Jim Prowse, John Van Dube, George Phelps, Norm McIntyre and Jim Flett.

In the summer of 1969, with the help of Charlie Rose and the Michigan Hot Rod Association, the Southern Ontario Street Rod Association was born listing 15 dues paying members on the original roster.



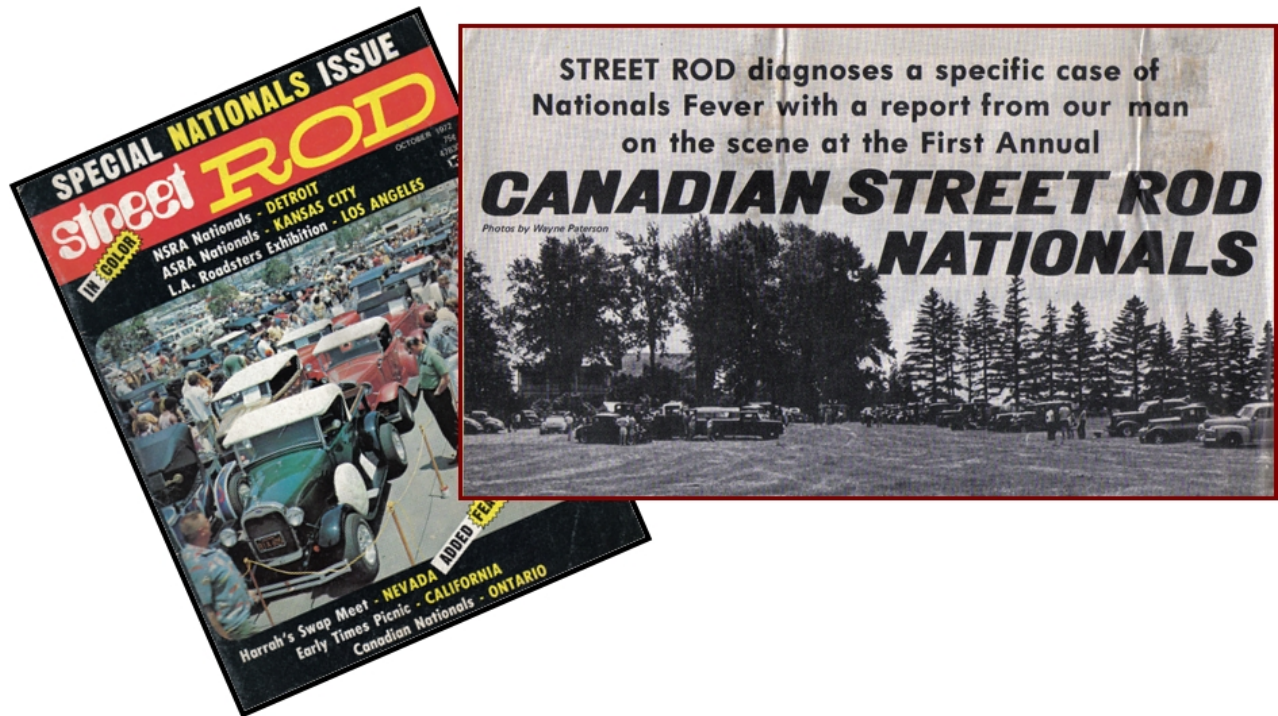
With Roy Bogart as President, membership grew quickly and in a short time there were 45 members stretched from Windsor to Cambridge and many points in between.

They initially met in members homes but soon outgrew that and switched to the London Auto Modifiers Garage. Membership rules clearly showed that the focus was on the cars being on the road and were limited to pre-49 modified vehicles only.



The goals of SOSRA were simple; to promote Street Rod Tours and Swap Meets, to help in the construction of safe Street Rods and to enjoy driving them!

Rod and Custom Magazine organized a “national” gathering for street rodders in 1970 in Peoria, Illinois. That event gave birth to both the National Street Rod Association and the Street Rod Nationals in the USA and fired up street rodders everywhere including the members of the fledgling Southern Ontario Street Rods. They went to work and planned and hosted the very first Canadian Street Rod Nationals or CANATS as they called it, in a field at Gratton’s Museum in London in July 1971.



This was a pivotal event in the annals of our sport as the Sunday morning breakfast lead to the creation of the Canadian Street Rod Association under Jim Flett’s leadership and from there CANAT’s became the vanguard event for the next 35 plus years.

Not only did SOSRA create the Canadian Nationals they also hosted the second one in 1972. There was a lot of growth in those first years and SOSRA was not going it alone as a group of clubs worked together to assist with each event. SOSRA was again the host club in 1974.

In 1977 when the Canats were awarded to the Manitoba Street Rod Association in Winnipeg, SOSRA showed there leadership and commitment by playing host to the first Ontario Regionals, an event that would occur for many years whenever the Nationals were held outside of Ontario.

In all, SOSRA hosted 5 National events and 2 Regionals, by far the most by any group in Canada. These were some of the largest attended street rod events in the country and helped drive the growth of CSRA and the sport through their success.

SOSRA have been extremely generous, not only with their time but also their finances. Over the years they has donated thousands of dollars, not only to CSRA but to many local charities including:

Crippled Children’s Hospital, Canadian Cancer Society, Canadian Heart Fund, The Red Cross, Muscular Dystrophy, Ronald MacDonald House, The Salvation Army, Local Food Banks, The University Hospital, Plus Child Reach and many others.

**Crippled Children's
Hospital**



**Canadian
Cancer
Society**

Canadian Heart Fund



**HEART &
STROKE
FOUNDATION**



local food banks



University Hospital, London

London Health Sciences Centre

Caring for You. Innovating for the World.®



These are a group of good people doing great things!

In 1973 with membership peaking at over 60 families, SOSRA created a Board of Directors so that those members in the various geographic areas could be represented on the Executive. Growth was steady, club activities were plentiful, rod runs, car shows, swap meets and cruises were the focus of the day.



Eventually, some of these Regional groups decided to form their own local clubs, so SOSRA worked with them and helped them get established. These included clubs in Tillsonburg, Windsor, Kent County, Woodstock and Sarnia.

In 1979 the membership developed a Constitution and Bylaws.

In 1980 they began the process to become incorporated and in 1981 they officially became "Southern Ontario Street Rods Inc."



In the early 80's membership began to slide for a host of reasons but in spite of this SOSRI celebrated their 20th anniversary by again playing host to the 1989 Canadian Street Rod Nationals at the Western Fairgrounds in London.

In 1995 it was decided to eliminate the pre-49 requirement and SOSRI chose to become a family oriented social club. Their constitution and by-laws were reevaluated and changed to reflect the new direction. Newer car owners were invited to join and membership again began to climb.

Happy 20th Anniversary



SOSRI has always had strong, effective leadership. In 2004 Bill Dobbie became President and he has continued to drive growth and increase membership participation in club events and activities.

SOSRI has become a club of 50 families with an eclectic mix of vehicles from the traditional street rods, to muscle cars, classic vehicles, trucks and post 49 street machines.



They are active in cruise nights, car shows, BBQ's and other club and community events.

In 2011 SOSRI undertook to host the Sunday Night Cruise at one of the Canadian Tire Stores in London. It has become an extremely popular event regularly drawing over 300 cars.

**SOUTHERN
ONTARIO
STREET RODS**
PRESENTS **2011**
**SUNDAY NITE
CRUZ-IN**



**EAST LONDON
CANADIAN TIRE
1975 DUNDAS ST. E.**

Every Sunday (May 1 Thru Sept 1st)

for additional info

BILL : 519-660-0888



Bill Dobbie and his group work hard year round securing sponsorship and working behind the scenes to provide a top notch evening for all the car owners to enjoy. And SOSRI continues their giving ways as they donated over \$4000.00 earned from the cruise to charities in their community.

The highest honour that SOSRI bestows upon it's members is awarding LIFE TIME MEMBERSHIP. It is not an annual practice but rather one that is awarded occasionally when it is truly earned. To date only 6 people have received this highest commendation.

They are:

Roy Bogart

John Van Dube

Jim Short

Jim Prowse

Cathy Easterbrook

Les Garrell

It's not an accident that SOSRI has remained active and viable all these years.

They have always been guided by strong and effective leadership. Think the likes of Roy Bogart and Bill Dobbie.

They have steadily and successfully drawn quality members who have shared values and attitudes. Think of the list of Lifetime Members and so many others. Think also of the charities and causes they support and help.

They continue to seek new venues and opportunities for the club. Think of the FIRST Canats, the FIRST Ontario Regionals, their successful cruise night other activities

And, they are not afraid of change. They have changed to reflect the times, including even altering their membership criteria to keep them current and viable.

But equally important is that some things have not changed in those 40 plus years.

They have not changed:

- *Their commitment to street rodding,
- *Their commitment to being a family oriented club,
- *Their commitment to share with and contribute to others

And their strong commitment to local community activities and events.

Welcome SOUTHERN ONTARIO STREET RODS INCORPORATED into the Canadian Street Rodding Hall Of Fame.

I ask President Bill Dobbie and Cathy Easterbrook to come forward and receive the award from Hall Of Fame Chairman Jim Cowan.



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